1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



to me: 'This is the only one who can speak better to thee about it. Thou dost not understand properly what has been said to thee; I do not lie. Last summer I killed one who was covered with iron, as I have already said several times. If I had not killed the horse first I could not have killed the man.'

"I said to him: 'What hast thou brought of his spoil to show us that thou speakest the truth?' 'As I wished to cut off his head I noticed men on horseback, who were blocking the way; I escaped with difficulty; I kept nothing to carry off; I threw away everything I had, even to my blanket in my flight. What I say is true, and I will have it told to thee by others who were with me the following spring. They are not here now, but thou shall see them. What I have said I repeat; the other side of the river cannot be seen; the water is salt; it is a country of mountains; a great extent between the mountains of fine land; many cattle, big and stout, white and of different colors; many stags and deer; I have seen their wheat fields, where no women are to be seen; what I tell thee is without deceit; thou will learn further of it afterwards.'"

It cannot well be doubted that what is recorded by Verendrye as having been related to him by the Mandans concerning the whites "who work in iron" on "the lower part of the rivers" refers to the Spaniards and mailed warriors of that race inhabiting the lower Mississippi, and that the Mandans then knew enough of that lower country to understand that those whites peopled it; and it seems a fair deduction from the reference to the lower part of the river being "very wide, land not being visible from one shore to the other; the water bad for drinking," that they there referred to the mouth of the Mississippi. Again, they speak of the "Pananas"; that is, the Pawnees or Aricaras, as having "several forts at a day's journey from the last of their forts." It also appears that some of their own warriors had come into hostile contact with the Spaniards, and it was made clear to Verendrye from information given him by the Mandans that "on the lower part of the river there were men like us, who made cloth and linen, were very numerous, and had wars with a large part of the Indians," whose "forts and houses are stone," and that it would "take a whole summer to make the journey" to the whites below.

Now it is in evidence from an entirely different source that

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17



Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go across the divide;[45] there you will find blacktail deer meat;
Go across the divide; there you will find blacktail deer meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to Grape River;[46] there you will find elk meat;
Go to Grape River; there you will find elk meat.

Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Eagles, go; leave us; go, everyone of you;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go; walk; go in the right direction;
Go to the Big Bend;[47] there you will find buffalo meat;
Go to the Big Bend; there you will find buffalo meat.
Now you are home.[48]

When this song was ended, the spirits of the eagles left to join their people in the meeting place of the spirits near a large body of water. Only the leaders could send the spirits away. Men without eagle-trapping rights were afraid to catch eagles for fear that the spirits, being unsent, might bring bad luck to the trappers. All who caught eagles gave the leader pay in feathers, calicoes, robes, or knives for singing these songs and sending the birds' spirits away.

Then the leader sang the cleansing song, rubbing all the feathers with the sage. He rubbed each person in the party to cleanse him and bring him back to a human being again. While trapping, the men were impersonating the small bears. My father gave each trapper a new name connected with the bears for the duration of trapping. Mandan generally had this change of names. If a trapper stumbled when out trapping, he would report it and get another name, otherwise he would have bad luck. Each man paid the leader for his name, but it was relinquished when the cleansing ceremony ended.

The leader and as many as wished went into the sweat lodge, where the trappers hung the feathers on the sides in imitation of the bear's lodge far to the north. The sweat-lodge rites completed the ceremonies, after which the families united again either to return home at once or to hunt along the way according to their inclinations.

Benson claimed to be the fourteenth owner of the bundle which he used. In order of succession from Black Wolf, the owners were reported as follows: (1) Black Wolf; (2) Bull Leg;

45. The Mandan called that section of the country between the Cannonball and Grand rivers "The Divide." The blacktail deer meat was believed to be on a high hill at the mouth of the Grand River and on the north bank.

46. The Little Bend of the Missouri River is at the mouth of the Cheyenne River, called by the Mandan Grape River.

47. The Big Bend of the Missouri is below Pierre, South Dakota.

48. The Mandan believed that the Missouri River entered the ocean not far below the Big Bend. This was believed to be the winter home of migratory waterfowl, corn, and the large birds of the eagle family (see chap. ix).